

THE

ל'פמ"ז

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OUR ORGANIZATION

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The AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaica Numismatica. It is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a non-profit association under the laws of the State of New York.

As an educational organization, the primary responsibility is the development of programs, publications, meeting and other activities which will bring news, history, technical, social and related background to the study of numismatics. Membership is open to all men and women of goodwill and to clubs who share the common goals of the Association.

The Association is the publisher of THE SHEKEL, a six times a year journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. It neither solicits or accepts advertising, paid or unpaid. Its views are the views and opinions of the writers and the pages and columns are open to all who submit material deemed by the editors to be of interest to the members.

The Association sponsors such major cultural/social/numismatic events as an annual Study Tour of Israel, national and regional conventions and such other activities and enterprises which will benefit the members. Dues are paid annually at \$10.00 per year; life memberships are offered to all at \$150.00 per year. Junior membership (under 18) \$2.50 per year. Your interest and participation will be welcomed by any of the affiliated clubs or as a general member of the Association.

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President's Message

Dear A.I.N.A. Member,

By the time you read this issue the Convention will be either in full bloom or it will be over. New directors will have been elected and officers will be elected. A.I.N.A. is alive and well.

We have proceeded to decentralize to become more efficient and I am pleased with the progress. You will be able to get better service with coin orders being processed by one person, the SHEKEL and Conventions by others, and membership and records with recognizable directors having duties with accountability to the Executive Board, the Board of Directors, and the organization.

All hobbies have their problems and I would be naive if I was not truthful but we are proceeding to plug up the holes and reinforce weaknesses thus becoming less wasteful and more efficient. You, our members, are the life-blood of this organization. If you have problems write us. We want you to stay and recommend us to your friends. Our membership is solid and will continue.

With this issue are important details on how and where to order your coins. Coin information hereafter will be included in the SHEKEL. Since I.G.C.M. no longer has a New York office it will be much simpler, less costly and more efficient for everyone to order from A.I.N.A. It is important that you tell your friends. Clubs have been protected and will get their discount.

The editor of the SHEKEL, Ed Schuman, has been instrumental in having many of the former SHEKEL contributors once more furnish interesting articles.

I hope to be able to work with the club officers in New York at the convention. Moe Weinschel deserves special thanks. I hope to see many of you at the annual meeting on Thursday. As always this is your organization and your comments are welcome.

Shalom,



Stan



NEW ADDRESS

A. I. N. A. 5150 W. Copans Road Suite 1193
Margate, Fla. 33063

החברה הממשלתית למדליות ולמטבעות בע"מ

ISRAEL GOVERNMENT COINS AND MEDALS CORPORATION LTD.



Dear AINA Member,

The State of Israel is 40!

The establishment of the State of Israel was proclaimed on May 14th, 1948, by David Ben Gurion, 1,878 years after the destruction of the second Temple in Jerusalem and 51 years after the first Zionist Congress in Basel, presided over by the visionary of the State, Theodor Herzl.

Thus, the hope, which had been maintained by the Jewish People, throughout their generations in exile, to return to the land of their forefathers and renew their national, economic and cultural independence, was realized.

The forty years of the State of Israel have proved to be one of the greatest miracles of the twentieth century. A small State, whose Jewish population numbered 650,000 at its inception, absorbed about two and a half million immigrants, amongst them refugees from the Holocaust and from persecutions in Africa and Asia. It withstood five wars against nations much greater than itself and came through victorious. It founded hundreds of urban and rural settlements from Mount Hermon in the North to the Red Sea Coast in the South; developed modern and sophisticated industry and agriculture; revived the Hebrew language and became one of the most important centers of culture in the world in music, theater, literature and the arts.

"If you will, it is no fairytale", said Herzl more than fifty years before the State of Israel was founded. The fairytale did indeed become a reality.

The Proclamation of the State is the main theme in our 1988 Independence Day Coin, which depicts this dramatic ceremony: David Ben Gurion, reading the Scroll of Independence, with the national flags and picture of Theodor Herzl, in the background — all within the figure 40.

The coin unites two moments in the life of our nation — its birth and its maturity.

We all hope that our 40th Anniversary will be the start of an age of peace, security, unite and economic prosperity for us and all mankind.

With very best wishes,

E. Shilon

Eliezer Shiloni
Managing Director

Israel's 40th Anniversary

Commemorative Coin

Independence Day 1988



Gold 10 new sheqalim, 1988-5748 "Mem" Mint mark (Munich Mint, West Germany); .900 fine, 30 millimeters, 17.28 grams, reeded edge. Mintage: 5,000 Proof. Obverse: Denomination 10 in the center with state emblem and Mint mark below. Inscription around: NEW SHEQALIM 1988 in English and Hebrew. Reverse: A scene from the proclamation of the state of Israel ceremony, showing David Ben Gurion in the center, national flags and a picture of Theodor Herzl, all within a figure 40. Inscription around in English and Hebrew: ISRAEL'S 40th ANNIVERSARY.

Silver 2 new sheqalim, 1988-5748 "Star of David" Mint mark (La Monnaie de Paris); .850 fine, 37 millimeters, 28.8 grams. Mintage: 10,000 Proof. Obverse: Denomination 2 in the center with state emblem to the left and Mint mark below. Inscription around in English and Hebrew: NEW SHEQALIM 1988. Reverse same as 10 new sheqalim.

Silver 1 new sheqel, 1988-5748 "Star of David" Mint mark (La Monnaie de Paris); .850 fine, 30 millimeters, 14.4 grams. Mintage: 11,000 Uncirculated. Obverse: Denomination 1 in the center with state emblem to the left and Mint mark below. Inscription around in English and Hebrew: NEW SHEQEL 1988. Reverse same as 10 new sheqalim.

Coins were struck to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Israel.

The obverse was designed by Ruben Nutels, and the reverse by Asher Kalderon.

"My beloved is mine"

the words on the reverse of the medal, taken from "Song of Songs" express love which cannot be vanquished. In Nachum Gutman's illustration of one of Bialik's legends, we see a young woman, King Solomon's daughter, unaware that her father is determined to send her to a far off island to prevent her from meeting her destined lover. The hand of destiny and the innocence of youth triumph in the end.

Nachum Gutman has created this image of a young woman – graceful and appealing, a lasting beauty.



Blossom of Galilee

a painting which reflects love for the Land of Israel and admiration for the small town of Safed, the town of Jewish Mystics, set in the mountains of Galilee, with its white houses and alluring beauty of pomegranates ripening on the branch. These themes are interwoven in simple and natural harmony in the works of Nachum Gutman, one of the artists who brought about a Renaissance in modern Israel.

Description of the Medal

Face: Lithograph in color of a part of the painting "Blossom of Galilee" by Nachum Gutman. The words "Blossom of Galilee", "שם רימון פורח", and the artist's signature:

Nachum Gutman

Reverse: A graceful girl, a fawn, a tree with doves on its branches: (Nachum Gutman's illustration of the legend "Sheloshah VeArba'ah" taken from Bialik's "Vayehi Hayom"), the words "My beloved is mine" Song of Songs, "הכניסיני תחת כנפך" (Bialik) and the artist's signature:

הכניסיני תחת כנפך

Edge: The State emblem, the words "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English. The metal content of the gold and silver medals.

Each medal is serially numbered.

Design: Yitzhak Bibas, using the paintings of Nachum Gutman.

Chromiste: David Tamerin

Reliefs: Tidhar Dagan

Mintings: Gold and silver 26mm – The Government Mint,
Bronze – Hecht, Silver 50mm. – Kretschmer



Collecting coins and medals is an exciting, enjoyable and enlightening hobby for both youth and adults alike.

Until now, it has not been easy for youth to partake in this educational hobby, mainly because of the price of the medals and sometimes, also, because of the subject.

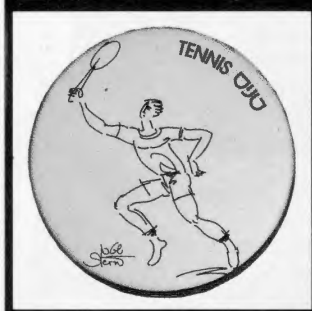
This series (and those following) will change everything. Now is the perfect opportunity for every young person to start collecting as well, thanks to our interesting and affordably priced medals, which are offered together with a lovely album **"My Israeli Medals Collection"** with explanatory page, enabling convenient collection and display.

Every few months, collectors will be offered three new 38.5 mm. diameter coppernickel medals (the favorite crown-size of collectors throughout the world) until the series of 12 medals is complete.

In this first series, each medal will represent one of the 12 most popular sports in Israel. The sports and their designs have been chosen in conjunction with the Olympic Committee of Israel.

The Sports Medals also have a true artistic value. They have been designed by the famous Jerusalem painter, Yossi Stern, and are signed by him.

SERIES OF
12 MEDALS
"SPORT
IN ISRAEL"





The Olympics! The greatest and most prestigious of world performances – the ambition of every athlete.

The 24th Olympic Games will take place in Seoul, Korea, in September 1988.

Israel will also take part in an equal measure in these Games.

We are honored members of the big Olympic family, embracing over 160 nations of the world.

Since we first took part in the Games in 1952 in Helsinki, we have continued to do so in each Olympic event apart from those in Moscow (1980).

Until the present, 152 Israeli athletes, both men and women, have participated.

We do not satisfy ourselves with the motto of De Coubertin, the father of modern Olympics — "The importance is not in winning but in participating." Instead, we make every effort in realizing the other Olympics motto — "**Citius – Altius – Fortius**" (Faster — Higher — Stronger).

We have not as yet gained any Olympic medal but the Olympic Committee for Israel and our sports institutions are doing everything possible so that our athletes' performances will be better and our achievements greater.

We swore at the graves of the **11 athletes**, murdered at the **Munich Olympic Games** in 1972, that we will never forget, **never surrender** and will forever continue and so, through all our sports events and especially through the Olympic Games, the spirits of those eleven remain with us. Sports-lovers in Israel praise the initiative taken by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation in contributing **both educationally and materially** to the advancement of Sport in Israel and to the preparation of our athletes for their performance in Seoul, through the issuing of a **new and beautiful medal**.

Let us allow the spirit of the Olympics to permeate us all and then, in addition to athletic achievement, **a spirit of brotherhood, peace and fraternity** will reign amongst the People of Israel and all nations.

Uri Afek

Director General
Olympic Committee of Israel



In honor of Israel's 40th Anniversary, the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation offers a new exciting set of five uncirculated legal tender coins. Struck double thickness. on extra heavy planchets, all in pure nickel with a frosted brilliant finish. Each coin is mintmarked with a tiny Star of David, characteristic of the Piefort Mintset. In addition, on the obverse, are the words "Israel's 40th Anniversary." Each set is appropriately housed in a special holder and boxed as illustrated.

A.I.N.A. members who desire to order any of I.G.C.M. new issues can use the enclosed order flyer. Your order will be processed as promptly as possible. Send your check or money order to:

A. I. N. A.

P.O. Box 836

Oakland Gardens, New York 11364

LEOPOLD KRONENBERG

BY EDWARD SCHUMAN

The Kronenberg family were one of the richest Jewish banking houses in Warsaw. The founder, Samuel Leizer, came to Warsaw from Wyszograd when the area was still under Prussian rule. At first, he operated as a successful money changer, and by 1822, he founded a bank. His wife evidently took an active role in business as she assumed control and managed the bank on her husband's death in 1825.

Three sons were born of this marriage. Leibel, born in 1812, eventually took over the family banking business, and is the subject of this article. He received the traditional Jewish education, and was also sent to a Catholic school for a general education. This was most unusual at the time. Kronenberg changed his surname to Leopold. He became active and prominent in the assimilationist circle of the Warsaw community.

He was an ambitious man, and sort power in both the economic and political fields. He took an active role in the Polish "Red" group which supported revolution to bring about the revival of Poland. After a while, he turned to the moderate "White" group which sort to reconcile with the Russian authorities. Although he apostasized in 1846, he didnot break off relations with the Jewish society, and continued to intercede on behalf of the Jews with the authorities who regarded him as the perfect assimilationist.

The scope of his manifold activites was extensive, and he succeeded in gathering around him a wide circle of financiers, industrialists, merchants, scholars, and political and public figures among whom Jews were prominent as his closest advisors. An astute merchant, he granted loans which developed the monopoly of the tobacco industry. He attracted the allegiance of both Poles and Jews, who considered this achievement as steps towards the independence of Poland. The Russian authorities also regarded him as one of their supporters, believing that his practical awareness would prevent him becoming involved in revolution.

Leopold Kronenberg leased many government factories and organized the distribution of their goods. He established several sugar factories, developed the glass industry, coal mining and a shipping company. By means of a consortium of Jewish bankers and Polish aristocrats, in 1869, he won the concession to finance

the expansion of the existing railroad network between Warsaw and Vienna. He was chairman of the merchants union, and president of the Stock Exchange commission.

He played an active role in the Warsaw affair known as the "Jewish War", the expression of the struggle against the anti-semitic sentiments published in the newspaper called *Gazeta Warszawska*. Kronenberg founded a rival newspaper which he called *Gazeta Polska* to counter act the anti-semitic propaganda. While his newspaper made little significant contribution to the improvement of the relations between Jews and Poles, nevertheless, it prejudiced the status of the rival anti-Semitic organ.

In 1870, he participated in the founding of the Commercial Bank of Warsaw. As a result of his initiative and investments, the Higher School for Commerce was founded in Warsaw in 1875. According to his will, this institution was committed to admitting pupils without any distinction of religion. Leopold Kronenberg died in 1878.



The illustrated check has only been in the author's collection for a short time. It is a draft for the amount of French francs 630.80, payable to the Credit Lyonnais in Marseille. The correspondent bank is Mess. de Rothschild Freres, Paris. The check is on a pastel colored paper, and the ink has been badly faded. The name LEOPOLD KRONENBERG, VARSOVIE, is the watermark of the paper. To insure against fraudulent documents, many bankers had special watermarked paper manufactured for this purpose. The check was first backlit, and then photographed, to enable the watermark to be illustrated.

The "Jewish" Empress of Rome?

by Peter S. Horvitz

It has long been believed that, from about the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Augustus through the first few centuries of the Common Era, there existed a large and organized body of semi-converts to Judaism living throughout the Roman Empire. This group is designated in English as the "God-fearers." This English term is used to translate the Latin term metuentes (literally "those who fear") and the Greek terms phoboumenoi (literally "God worshippers.") According to this belief, this group followed some of the tenets of the Jewish faith, particularly monotheism and observance of the Sabbath, but they did not go completely through with conversion, as would be symbolized by circumcision.

The major source of our information on the God-fearers is the Christian Acts of the Apostles. Besides this source, there exists various quotations from classical authors who use the same or similar terms. In none of these cases, however, are the terms used unequivocally to refer to the same group as in Acts.

Despite the rather limited nature of the evidence concerning the God-fearers, the existence of this group was never seriously challenged until quite recently, when A. Thomas Kraabel, a leading expert in Hellenistic Judaism, published an article entitled "The Disappearance of the God-Fearers" in the journal Numen. Kraabel pointed out, in his article, the lack of contemporary



evidence concerning the God-fearers. Furthermore, he argued, that the whole framework of information concerning the God-fearers based on classical sources stood only when the authorities were used in reference to Acts.

But even as Kraabel's article was being published, two inscriptions from the ancient Roman city of Aphrodisias in southwest Turkey were revealed which just may provide the contemporary evidence for the existence of the God-fearers that Kraabel lacked. One of these inscriptions, from the 3rd century C. E., is a list of donors to a Jewish religious building. The first half are Jewish names, the second half are theosebeis donors, all with Greek names.

The whole question has become a controversial one. Excellent articles on both sides of the issue appear in the Sept.-Oct., 1986 Biblical Archaeology Review, pp. 44-69, including a photograph of one of the Aphrodisias inscriptions. A short, updated summary of the question appears in the March-Apr., 1987 issue of the same review, pp. 52-53.

One ancient Jewish historian who has been prominently referred to in his use of the Greek equivalents for "God-fearers" is Josephus Flavius. However, the term theosebes, the term used in the Aphrodisias inscription, appears only once in Josephus's work. This usage is a description of the second wife of the Emperor Nero, Poppaea Sabina (Antiquities 20, 195.) In this pas-

sage, Poppaea is described as interceding with Nero in behalf of the Jews to prevent the destruction of a wall that had been erected in the Temple complex to block the view that King Agrippa II had of the sacrifices. Another time, Poppaea interceded with Nero for the Jews in behalf of some priests who had been imprisoned. Josephus himself was a witness to this incident in 64 C. E. (Life, 16.) Furthermore, Poppaea welcomed Jews to her court, including the Jewish actor Aliturus and Josephus, himself, to whom she gave many gifts. It is not a pointless speculation that the "God-fearing" Poppaea's influence might have forestalled the First Jewish Revolt, if she had not been accidentally killed by Nero when he kicked her in a fit of rage, in 65 C. E.

Josephus's representation of Poppaea is consistently sympathetic. On the other hand, the Roman historian Tacitus presents a much different portrait. He represents Poppaea as both blood-thirsty and adulterous. However, one must remember in this context, that Tacitus was by no means sympathetic to the Jews and if he had knowledge of Poppaea being a semi-convert to Judaism, this would have been taken by the conservative historian only as evidence of her bad character. Suetonius, who never missed an opportunity of retailing scandal, has nothing negative to say regarding Poppaea's character.

The evidence for Poppaea's conversion is open to interpretation, but her empathy for the Jewish people is not. Perhaps, the increasing evidence on the God-fearers will some day make it absolute-

ly clear whether Poppaea, called by Josephus theosebēs, was a member of an organized group of semi-converts. But the evidence for Poppaea as philo-Semite is conclusive.

While Poppaea does not appear on any coins of the regular Roman series, she does appear on a number of Roman colonial coins, usually sharing honors on the coin with her husband Nero. Coins from Thyatira in Lydia, Galatia, Antiochia and Orontem in Syria, and Alexandria in Egypt all show the head or bust of Nero on the obverse and the bust of Poppaea on the reverse. Coins from Smyrna in Ionia and Iconium in Lycaonia both show Nero on the obverse and full length figures of Poppaea on the reverse. A coin from Ephesus in Ionia has conjoined heads of Nero and Poppaea on the obverse and a stag on the reverse. Coins with just the head of Poppaea on the obverse and various designs on the reverse were issued by Perinthus in Thrace, Acmonia in Phrygia, and Laodiceia ad Lycum in Phrygia.

After Poppaea's death, an uncertain colonial mint issued a coin to her memory and to the memory of her daughter by Nero, Claudia, who had died at four months old. This coin shows on both sides temples, with standing figures within.

All of the coins of Poppaea were issued in bronze except for that of Antiochia, in silver, and that of Alexandria, in billon. The Alexandrian coins of Poppaea are fairly common, but all the other issues are scarce. For full details on all these issued the reader is referred to Greek Imperial Coins and Their Values by David R. Sear (London: B. A. Seaby, 1982), pp. 62-64.

A Survey of Lodz Ghetto Coins

by Steve Feller, member of AINA

At last year's ANA annual convention in Milwaukee I had the opportunity of presenting a talk to the "Numismatic Theater" on the topic, "Money from the Lodz Ghetto". Prior to the talk and just ten minutes before the opening of the convention, California gold coin dealer, Mr. Jay Roe of Madison, Wisconsin, paged me to the main entrance of the bourse floor. There he said that he had read in the convention program about my talk and was wondering if I would be interested in a 1942 10 pfennig coin of the Litzmannstadt (Lodz) ghetto. As I have spent several years trying to research various aspects of numismatics of the Holocaust, and in the past few years have seen but a handful of reported sales of this coin, I was naturally interested. So he proceeded to show me a detailed x-ray florescence report of the coin (which he had carefully cleaned) and he had determined that the coin was made of pure magnesium — not an alloy called electrum as reported by others, where electrum is made of aluminum and magnesium.

Naturally, I asked Mr. Roe where he had obtained the coin. The answer was, low and behold, from another dealer who was also on the bourse floor. I proceeded to visit that dealer and found out that he had purchased a small hoard of Lodz ghetto coins of various types. What struck me about the hoard was its obvious genuineness. A large number of the coins were heavily corroded or pitted. These were not newly made coins for the commercial trade. No these were, to me at least, historical treasures, survivors of a lost people. As my grandmother is from Poddebice — located about 15 miles NW of Lodz these people were, in part, my people.

Recently (December 1986), I began to wonder if there was a simple way to measure the density of the different types of ghetto coins so that they could be more properly described and attributed and perhaps to find a simple way to determine the metallic content of the coins. It is the purpose of this article to discuss how to do this and to report a survey of a modest number of the coins. First, however, it seems appropriate to go over the general history of the coins.

Historical Background of the Lodz Ghetto Coins

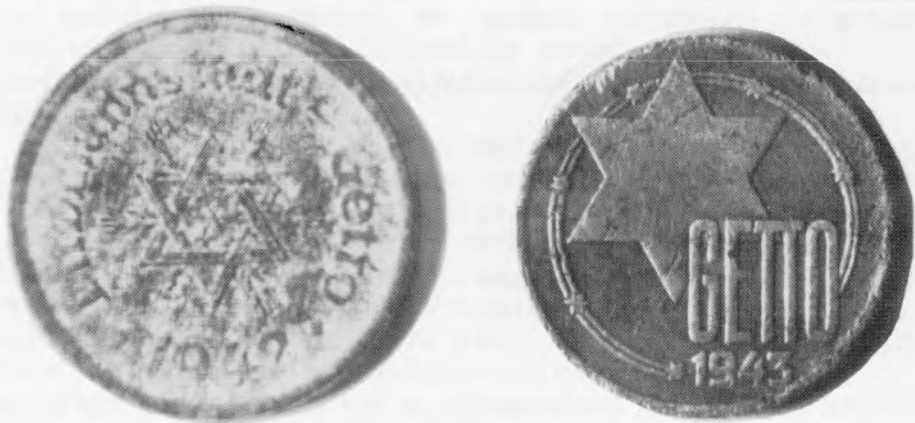
The Lodz Ghetto was the only ghetto or concentration camp during the Nazi era to strike coins. The coins are moving in their symbolism and deep meaning. Take the time to examine the photos. The pieces are known in seven main varieties. A listing of the known coins follows:

<u>Coin Date</u>	<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Metal</u>	<u>When Issued</u>	<u>Approximate Value in VF</u>
1942	10 pfennig	magnesium	June 1942	\$ 150
1942	10 pfennig	magnesium	December 8, 1942	150
1943	5 Mark	magnesium	February 22, 1944	30
1943	5 Mark	aluminum	February 22, 1944	15
1943	10 Mark	magnesium	December 27, 1943	30
1943	10 Mark	aluminum	December 27, 1943	15

These coins, in addition to numerous paper currencies including a full regular banknote issue dated May 15, 1940, were issued for use within a several square block enclave in the poorest section of the Polish mill town Lodz. It is ironic that the first issue of the 10 pfennig coin was rejected as it emulated the 10 pfennig coin of the Reich, (See Photos) while the very Jewish designs of the 1943 coins were actually struck within the ghetto confines, unlike the ghetto currency.

Besides the above listings the coins are known in other metals including silver. These off-metal strikings are presumably official souvenirs issued for the Nazi tyrants. Also a five pfennig pattern is known and looks very much like the first issue 10 pfennig coin of 1942. However, there have not been any reports of this denomination in recent years (at least not any that this author is aware of).

First Issue 1942 10 pfennig magnesium coin from the Lodz Ghetto. This issue (really a pattern design) was rejected because of the close similarity to the 10 pfennig Nazi coin made in zinc.



A 20 Mark Lodz Ghetto Coin dated 1943 and struck in aluminum.

Physical Characteristics of the Coins

Seventeen coins were inspected, all believed to be genuine. Of the above types only the second issue of the 10 pfennig coin is missing. Masses were found on a "Mettler" analytical balance. Such high quality balances can be readily found in most college chemistry or physics departments. Volumes were found by assuming the coins to be cylinders. The diameter, d , and thickness, t , were measured for each coin using a micrometer for t and a vernier caliper for d . The diameter was measured with confidence while the thickness could not be. Using the micrometer a minimum thickness was found by scanning the surface of the coin. This was still an overestimate of the true thickness since all measurements using the micrometer include some of the raised devices on the coin and this tend to overstate the thickness. The volume was then found by using:

$$V = (\pi d^2 t) / 4$$

The masses of the coins are (in grams):

<u>10 Pfennig Mg</u> (first issue)	0.96	0.96	0.97	0.88 (cleaned)
<u>5 Mark Mg</u>	0.96	0.94		
<u>5 Mark Al</u>	1.63	1.58		
<u>10 Mark Mg</u>	1.66	1.59	1.76 (coated with lacquer)	
<u>10 Mark Al</u>	2.70	2.63	2.66	3.36 (thick planchet)
<u>20 Mark Al</u>	6.77	6.85		

The diameters of the coins were found to be (in millimeters):

<u>10 Pfennig Mg</u> (first issue)	21.3	21.2	21.5	20.9 (cleaned)
<u>5 Mark Mg</u>	22.6	22.5		
<u>5 Mark Al</u>	22.5	22.5		
<u>10 Mark Mg</u>	28.3	28.2	28.5 (coated with lacquer)	
<u>10 Mark Al</u>	28.3	28.3	28.3	28.3 (thick planchet)
<u>20 Mark Al</u>	33.5	33.4		

The thicknesses of the coins were measured as (in millimeters):

<u>10 Pfennig Mg</u> (first issue)	1.66	1.69	1.61	1.53 (cleaned)
<u>5 Mark Mg</u>	1.46	1.48		
<u>5 Mark Al</u>	1.57	1.58		
<u>10 Mark Mg</u>	1.65	1.58	1.70 (coated with lacquer)	
<u>10 Mark Al</u>	1.68	1.66	1.68	2.11 (thick planchet)
<u>20 Mark Al</u>	2.93	2.98		

From these measurements it was possible to find the volumes of the various coins by using the above formula and hence their densities by dividing the masses by the volumes. To summarize this, the average values of the density for each type will be given here:

<u>10 Pfennig Mg</u> (first issue)	1.63 g/cm ³
<u>5 Mark Mg</u>	1.61 g/cm ³
<u>5 Mark Al</u>	2.55 g/cm ³
<u>10 Mark Mg</u>	1.62 g/cm ³
<u>10 Mark Al</u>	2.51 g/cm ³
<u>20 Mark Al</u>	2.62 g/cm ³

These densities clump into two obvious groups: one centered around 1.62 g/cm³ and the other at 2.56 g/cm³. It will now be argued that this is consistent with the "aluminum" coins being pure aluminum and the "magnesium" coins likewise being pure magnesium. The book values for the respective densities of the two metals are:

density of Al = 2.70 g/cm³ and density of Mg = 1.74 g/cm³.

The measured values for the densities are each slightly below the pure metal value and by about the same deficiency. This is believed to be so since the thicknesses were slightly high as the micrometer doesn't properly average out the thickness of the coin but measures between high points on the coins surface. There is no evidence that the magnesium coins are alloyed with aluminum whatsoever as then the density would be expected to be between the values of magnesium and aluminum — this is as Mr. Roe's X-ray analysis revealed!

It seems that the above measurements should allow collectors to easily discern between the two types — even when the magnesium coins are heavily corroded as usual or not (as from a fresh cleaning, for example) — The masses and the densities seem to be clear and simple ways to discriminate between the types of coins.

Striking Characteristics

The Lodz Ghetto coins come poorly struck in general. They were often struck from worn dies, with numerous and extensive die breaks (see photos), and with multiple impressions. Mr. Abraham Nachmany in the March-April 1984 issue of The Shekel also noted the extensive diebreaks which occur on these coins. I have observed that the same diebreaks can easily be traced on various examples of these coins.

Dr. Alan York discussed a tiny security mark on the reverse of the genuine 20 mark aluminum coin in the second special issue of The Shekel on the Holocaust (March-April 1983). This mark is in the form of a tiny triangle which appears in the field at the bottom of the coin. See the photo for a clear illustration of this mark made by special side illumination of the coin. It should be noted that this mark is difficult to see and I have a specimen of the coin from a later state of the die which shows the triangle but only barely. Great care should be used when looking for this mark.

A rather curious variety of the 20 mark coin has also been reported in which the N in the word "IN" of "In Litzmannstadt" is retrograde or backwards! Only a few examples of this variety are known.

I would be pleased to further discuss these coins with interested readers and I can be reached at the Physics Department, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402.



The triangular security mark which appears on the lower reverse of the 20 Mark Lodz Ghetto coin struck in aluminum. The diebreak which appears just to the right of the triangle has been identified on at least one other 20 Mark coin.

Three impressions appear on this 10 Mark Lodz Ghetto coin struck in aluminum.



Reverse of the 20 Mark ghetto coin dated 1943

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Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge Mr. Jay Roe for tracking me down at the ANA convention in Milwaukee and sharing with me an X-ray analysis of a 10 pfennig Lodz Ghetto coin. Mr. Leo Handler and Dr. Charles Hamilton are thanked for their photographic help. Dr. Alan York is acknowledged for useful conversations.

The Periods of Gaza Coinage

Edward Janis

Gaza, a city very much in the news these days, has a long deep history in antiquity. We learn in the Bible that Samson met with Delilah in the Philistine city of Gaza. As a caravanserai, it was a welcome stop to the merchants and their camels coming or going to Egypt through the unfriendly desert. Because Gaza was so immersed in commerce with all the known cultures of the day, Gaza was quickly exposed to that new invention of man: coined money. It was not long thereafter that Gaza not only imitated known coinage but also turned out and signed their coins with their own mint marks.

The following is not a corpus. It identifies the periods of the coinage, the type of coins, the minting authority, the most common devices, legends and period of issue.

Greco-Palestine Series — Hill described these coins as Philisto-Arabian and belonging to the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. These coins are copies of the coins of Athens (Attica) and have nothing to do with Arabia. His dating is too early. A copy cannot be older than the coin that is being copied. The majority of the copied coins are obels (about 5/16" in diameter) and triobels (approx. 3/16"). The dating would be 4th century. The most common types are the Owl reverses and the Forepart-of-Horse. The obverse show Janiform heads, female heads possibly crude Athena types, and other crude male Bearded and Beardless heads. Certain of these coins give the name of Gaza in Phoenician lettering; AZ, Aza or just the O which is the first letter of the city's name.

The strip of land on which Gaza is located running from Latakia in Turkey in the North to the current Suez Canal in the South has experienced more tides of armies than any other location on earth. Without going back to Biblical times, let us therefore only consider the happenings after the introduction of coinage.

Prior to the conquest by Alexander the Great, the Persians struck silver from 360-351 B.C. Gaza was part of the Province of Yehud.

Persian Series — Those Yehud pieces that contain human effigies, including the bearded male divinity (Yahu) riding on his winged wheel.

The inhabitants of Gaza were reluctant to surrender to Alexander. After a two month siege, the Macedonians under Alexander captured the city in 330 B.C. and remained in control until Alexander's death in 323 B.C. No local coinage was struck during this period. When Alexander's kingdom was partitioned under his generals, the Diadochi ('successors'), Gaza in Judaea was allotted to the satrap of Syria. In 320 Ptolomy Lagi invaded and annexed Syria.

Ptolomaic Series — The initial coinage had an obverse of Ptolomy I or a crude Athena with the reverse retaining the previous obels and minute tetartemorions. Silver tetradrachms were struck under Ptolemy II from 261-256 B.C. In 256-5 B.C., there exists a rare tetradrachm that has both the Joppa and the Gaza mintmarks in the proper location in the left field. This is strong evi-

dence that either a central mint or a portable mint existed. It does not rule out coinage to be used, distributed or exchanged in a given city or as in this case, in two cities Joppa and Gaza.

In 204 B.C., Egypt lost control of Palestine after the accession of the child king Ptolomy V at the age of five. Antiochus III (the Great) moved against this infant and advanced into Judaea. Judaea became a province of Syria after the welcoming of the Selucids into Jerusalem in 198 B.C.

Selucid Series — Bronze coinage is known under Antiochus IV (175-163 B.C.), Alexander I, and Demetrius II Nicator. Some of the issues are pure local city coins that feature the local gods and goddesses viz; Tyche, Zeus, Hercules and doves and eagles on the reverse together with the Gaza mintmark, the Phoenician Mem (for Marnas, their local chief god.) There exists an extremely rare silver tetradrachm of Antiochus V that Newell placed as a coin of Antioch. (More on this is a later issue.)

Although the ensuing period is rich in Jewish history such as the wars with Antiochus IV, the Maccabaeen rising and the victory of Judas Maccabee at Emmaus, there are no changes until after the conquest of Syria by Pompey in 66-63 B.C. Roman city coinage in Gaza started under Augustus in the year 5/6 A.D. and continued to 241/242 under Gordian III a spread of 236 years. Some of the pieces were struck at the time of Hadrian and Pius when Gaza enjoyed a Quasi-Autonomous status and do not appear as either the earlier or later issues under the Romans which are typical Greek Imperial coins. Greek Imperial coins are neither Greek or Imperial. They are a local issue which features the Emperor, King, King's wife or son with the obverse legends being in Latin or Greek depending on the status of the city-state. In the lower status of Roman Gaza the obverse language is Greek. The reverses have legends and dates in Greek.

Roman Series — With the usual contemporary ruler on the obverse, the reverses the City-Goddess sometimes alone, sometimes with another local god viz. Io. The main god Marnas is honored by the first letter of his name. The Phoenician mem, which looks like a swastika appears as a mintmark of Gaza on coins where the name or first two letters do not appear in Greek. Silver tetradrachms, most likely used to pay the stationed legions, were struck under Caracalla and Diadumenian. These inferior silver pieces had the usual eagle and the mem on their reverses. Coinage ceased in 242 A.D. under Gordian III.

Mintage was again started circ 700 A.D. under the Post-Reform Period under the Umayyads. These bronze pieces like all Post Reform coinage, have no images. Ghazza is within the Iliya Filistin (Aelia for Hadrian's name for Jerusalem; Filistin for Palestine) a Jund or military district.

Gaza, the small city so prominent in the news these days, has had coinage for approximately twelve hundred years under six governments not counting its own.



Top line: SELUCID PERIOD: Antiochus V, Eupator tetradrachm with seated Zeus; Bronze of Demetrius II corymbos over tripod; Antiochus IV bronze with Nike standing in a biga—the two horses are galloping to left. All three coins have the gamma alpha, the first letters of Gaza.

2nd & 3rd line: ROMAN PERIOD: The reverse shows the local gods and goddesses: Standing City Goddess with spear and cornucopia; Hercules with club; Io and City Goddess holding hands; Appollo; Bust of turreted City Goddess; Diana; Artemis with bow and Marnes standing nude in temple.

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The Story of the Palestine Currency Board

100 Pound Bank Note

by Jerry Yahalom and Josef Meroz

The Story of the 100 IL — one of the most expensive bank notes —

The 100 IL bank note was the highest denomination of bank notes circulating during the British Mandate of Palestine. Its worth was equivalent to forty months' wages of a skilled worker during that period. The few people who were privileged to cast their eyes, and hold them in their hands were wealthy businessmen, selected bankers, and rich Arab sheiks who placed their money in steel safes buried under the rug in their tents. The sheiks specially searched for high denominations to put in their safes as the steel safe could not hold enough bank notes of small denominations. The scarcity of this bank note was manifested during the British Mandate period, and its value increased many folds after its withdrawal from circulation. It is no wonder that this bank note is considered as one of the scarcest bank notes which circulated in any country in the world. Its value in a crisp uncirculated condition is left to the imagination of the collectors.

To this day it is unclear as to its usefulness. Why did the Palestine Currency Board, rest in peace, issue such a high denomination in an economically backward country as Palestine on November 1, 1927?

Some technical data on this bank note is needed. The size is 4 x 7 1/2 inches (102 x 191 mm), color: Grey, Brown, and Green. It depicts the Tower of Ramle. The reverse the Tower of Pzael (misnomered the Tower of David).

All through the British Mandate period this bank note of 100 IL was issued on three different dates: 1927, 1929, and 1942. The first official monetary report, printed as part of the "Official Newsletter" advised that in March 1928, five hundred thirty five (535) notes of this denomination were in circulation. Their number was gradually decreased until the low point in March 1934 when only 56 of the notes remained in circulation. It is known that in March 1947 a total of 1795 100 IL bank notes were released for circulation.

The Palestine Currency Board bank notes were withdrawn from circulation in Israel in 1948, however they were withdrawn from Jordan on September 30, 1950. In the Gaza Strip they were withdrawn on June 9th, 1951. Since bank notes of 100 IL represented a very high value, they were mainly transfer instruments between various banks. The banks transported the notes to London, England, to be converted to British Sterling Pounds by the "Crown Agents". At the end of March 1952, as notes remained in circulation, assuming that none of the notes were damaged, or destroyed, lost or rotted away, or eaten by rats. As bank safe deposit boxes were unknown at the time large amounts of notes were buried in the ground subject to all natural disaster. An additional nine notes were redeemed by the British Treasury and were exchanged for one hundred British Pounds — an even exchange. The "Crown Agents" of the British Treasury are still ready to even exchange any remaining notes —

any takers? As a matter of fact there are no takers to exchange any remaining notes of lower value.

Out there in "circulation" are seven bank notes still floating without being stamped "cancelled". Also known to exist are specimen notes with serial numbers of A000 000 and the word cancelled punched out by small holes. A separate story can be told on how some cancelled notes withdrawn from circulation, reached the open market, and commanded very high prices.

Let us concentrate on the remaining seven notes. The first one that was found was issued in 1927 (serial number D000719). This note was offered for sale in the sixties to a currency dealer in London (price unknown). The dealer offered the note to Stanley Gibbons Auction House to be auctioned. It was auctioned in 1972 (Lot 552) by Stanley Gibbons and was bought by an American Jewish collector who resides in Florida who paid for it 1,100 British Pounds (the equivalent of \$2,684.00). This note was offered later to NASCA Auction House to be auctioned and it went on the block in 1978 (lot #2214) and hammered down at \$17,000. The buyer is an American dealer specializing in Israel numismatics. This note is being offered for sale at approximately \$35,000.

The second 100 IL note was also a 1927 issue (serial number D 000935) and was sold in 1973 by a dealer in Denver to a private collector for \$10,000. Later the same note was sold in 1977 to another collector from Florida for \$20,000. This particular collector is assumed to have the largest collection of modern Israel numismatic items. It is rumored that this note along with other Palestine bank notes were stolen in 1984 or the beginning of 1985. No official confirmation was ever made.

The third bank note dated 1929 (serial number D 001020) is in the Collection of an attorney from Kalamazoo, Michigan. This note was purchased in the sixties at an estimated price between \$5,000 and \$8,000.

The fourth note is also a 1929 issue (serial number D 001088) was sold to an attorney-collector from Cleveland, Ohio who owns one of the largest collections of modern Israel numismatic items. This bank note was subsequently sold to a collector from Delaware for an estimated price of \$27,000.

The fifth and sixth notes are presumed to be in the United States. However, no details are available, at this time, besides their date of issue and their serial numbers. The fifth note is a 1927 issue, serial number: D000049, and number six note was issued in 1942 with serial number D000118.

The seventh note is a mysterious one. There are few stories circulating among collectors as to its existence. One story states that a wealthy Arab living in Saudi Arabia owns it, and does not intend to part with it ever, maybe be even buried with it. Another fantastic story relates that this note is crisp uncirculated owned by an Israeli citizen. According to the story, it bears the signature of Pinchas Rutenberg, the founder of the Electric Company in Israel. The story seems unrealistic, but plausible. During the British Mandate period the value of such note was of huge amount, as means of ascertaining its authenticity it was customary for the owner of the note to affix his signature on the margin as a guarantee for its authenticity and be acceptable by the bank as a true note.



FACE AND BACK OF THE
J. J. VAN GROVER SPECIMEN
ONE HUNDRED PALESTINE
POUND BANKNOTE



It is also known that this arrangement was acceptable, in those days for notes valued at 50 IL. There isn't a single bank note among the few left with collectors, that does not show on one side or the other these, "Securities Signatures". Since only wealthy industrialists, businessmen, bankers and wealthy sheiks could afford to own the high denominations bank notes, there is no reason why famous personalities' signatures should not be found on the margins of such notes.

Regarding one of those bank notes (100 IL) that was acquired by an American coin dealer from New York in a public auction of the NASCA company in 1977 in New York. The offering of the bank note necessitated a special auction catalog and a picture of the bank note appeared on the cover. On the margins of this bank note, a few signatures were found. It is possible that additional signatures appear on the other side. Another explanation why the signatures appear on the 50 IL notes were related by a veteran coin dealer who lived in Palestine at the time, who claims to hold some of those notes at one time or another. After the Irgun (National Military Organization) robbed a Barclay's bank branch during the forties, it was discovered by the authorities that a large quantity of 50 IL notes were included in the robbery. In order to catch the robbers, the British Government issued an edict that anyone transferring a 50 IL note must sign his name on the note. This would enable the authorities to trace the robbers through their signatures on the bank notes whose serial numbers were known. Following this directive it became customary to sign each high denomination note (50 IL & 100 IL).

Another incredible story was heard regarding the seventh 100 IL note. About eight years ago it was told by a successful coin dealer. A young man approached him with a large packet of bank notes, according to the young man, laid in a safe deposit belonging to his father, who just passed away. When the young man went to the safe deposit box he found these bank notes in almost uncirculated condition. The coin dealer approached two well known dealers who were considered experts in this field to purchase the notes. The dealers declined to come up with the requested sum of money to purchase the notes. The dealer then turned to known collectors overseas and one of the collectors who wished to be anonymous purchased the 100 IL for an estimated \$80,000. The dealer in his haste forgot to photograph the note, and does not remember the serial number or the year of issue of that note. To this date he regrets his lack of action and failure to record the note. It is hard to verify this story's authenticity, and the dealer's integrity.

It is in the realm of possibility that this is the fifth or sixth note mentioned earlier in this article. In the event that the story is true, it is the opinion of the coin dealer that when this crisp bank note is found and offered for sale it could command a price of \$200,000 and more. Isn't this a fantastic price to pay for a bank note???

Jews in the Egyptians Mints of the Fatimids and Ayyubids

by Samuel Lachman, Haifa

This description covers the period of the Cairo Geniza as presented by Goitein in 'A Mediterranean Society' (1), i.e. 358 — 648 H/969 — 1250.

Geniza (pronounce Gheneeza) denotes the storeroom of a synagogue or any other place in which papers covered with Hebrew letters are discarded. For according to Jewish belief, which has its parallels in Muslim and Coptic customs, no paper on which the name of God is found should be destroyed. So far, only the Genizas of a synagogue in Fustāt (Old Cairo) and of the nearby cemetery of al-Basātīn have been found. These two are called, by a common designation, 'The Cairo Geniza'.(2).

The Shī'a dynasty of the Fatimids dates from its foundation at Qayrawān in 297 H/910. The Fatimid army conquered Egypt in Sha'bān 358/August 969. The last Fatimid caliph was deposed on 3 Muḥarram 567/6 September 1171 (3). The last Fatimid coin minted at Cairo is dated 566 H/1170-1171.(4).

The Ayyūbids were rulers of Egypt from Jumādā 564/March 1169 until Muḥarram 648/April 1250. Saladin (al-Nāṣir Ṣalaḥ al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Ayyūb) was already from Jumādā II 564/March 1169 vezir of the Fatimid caliph. From 567 H/ to 569 H/1171 — 1173 he was a vassal of Nūr as-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Zangī of Aleppo, and in 570-71 H/1174 a nominal vassal of al-Ṣaliḥ Ismā'il b. Maḥmūd. From 571 H he was independent. The first coins struck by Saladin are dated 567 H. The last Ayyūbid coin is dated 647 H/1249-1250 (5).

Goitein in his Geniza studies does not separate the Fatimid and Ayyūbid period, although he indicates the period here and there. He states that craftsmen worked in the mind for fā'ida (profit), that is, they were paid by the piece, and were not in receipt of regular emulments. It is possible that the Jewish administrator of the mint was also paid by the job (7). Only few professions are mentioned, i.e.

- a) mutawallī dār al-ḍarb (administrator of the mint).
- b) ṣaḥīb dār al-ḍarb (probably the same as a).
- c) ḍāmin dār al-ḍarb (the tax farmer of the mint)(8).
- d) mūrīd (purveyor of precious metals for the mint)(9).
- e) sabbāk (caster) (10).
- f) ḍarrab (hammerer) (10) may also apply to the mint, but is not evident from the Geniza.

There were at least 25 to 30 professions in a mint. The Fustat (Old Cairo) mint employed probably upward of 100 workers. Unfortunately, Goitein does not present a more detailed description of the mint.

Neūstadt (12), based on Qalqashandi, writes that the Chief Qaḍī was the head of the Mint and he appointed as administrator the one recommended by the government. This arrangement was in force during the time of the Fatimids and Ayyūbids and later, until the reign of Sultan Muḥammad b. Qala'un (Bahri Mamlūks).

Cahen (11) presented a description of the minting in Egypt at the time of change over from the Fatimid to the Ayyūbid rule. Payments to the employees as well as the benefit of the government are mentioned. However, it is stated that all persons who brought precious metals to the mint were called mauridun (pl. of mūrid), and it appears that they were not employees of the mint. Nothing is said about partnerships.

Another point to be mentioned is the fact, that at the Geniza time, the ṣayrafi was a money-changer and banker. The banker in government service was called jahbadh.(13). Goiteins description mentions only a limited number of names. The following are such quotations, including those without names.

1. Abū Sa'd Khalaf b. Salāma (or Halfon b. Solomon in Hebrew) had been working with a brother in the caliphal mint in March 1066. He is from the sukkari family. (14).
2. An agreement between an uncle and his nephew dated March 12, 1066, states that all obligations resulting from the work of the two in the caliphal mint will be born by them in equal shares.(15).
3. November 30, 1076.

Maṣṣūr b. Khalaf of Tyre (Lebanon) undertakes to work for a full year in partnership with Japhet b. Abraham and Solomon b. Abraham (not relatives). He will receive half the profit and the two others the other half; he promises not to interrupt his work by travel and to pay 20 dinars even for the mere request of being permitted to travel in order to see his children and wife.

The first page of the contract, where the nature of the work concerned was indicated has not been preserved, but in another document, dated 1086, Maṣṣūr sifts gold dust for Japhet b. Abraham, who appears there as mutawallī dār al-ḍarb, administrator of the mint. Thus it is likely that the work here also was connected with minting, the two partners providing the materials, or standing security to the government for Maṣṣūr, while the latter provided the labor. — The document will be published by A. Udovitch.(16). Japhet b. Abraham is mentioned in quite a number of documents during the period 1076 — 1103, but not as administrator of the mint (17).

4. Hiba and Bū Naṣr, mūrīds. 1140's.(18).
5. 15 August 1171 (19).

Shelah, known as Faḍā'il, the Melter, and Barākhōt b. Elazar, known as Barakāt, the Melter, son of Abū Naṣr, the mūrid or purveyor (of precious metal to the caliphal mint) dissolve their partnership and release each other from all obligations. "Under the authority of our lord Moses (Maimonides) the great master in Israel." May be connected with the mint.

6. Two workers in the caliphal mint formed a partnership, the senior partner receiving three-quarters of the profit and making also the accounts for the two. When he paid his junior partner without rendering account, Maimonides decided that he was obliged to do so, and had to give an oath in case he did not remember the details. (Responsa of Maimonides). — Undated. Maimonides came to Egypt in about 1166, and died in 1204. The work carried out by the partners is not mentioned.(20).

7. Three sabbāks (employed in the mint), last third of the 12th century (21).
8. An official of the caliphal mint at Alexandria is mentioned.(22).
9. Letter to Abū 'l-Faḍl al-mūrīd b. Tamīm (probably Ayyubid time)(23).
10. Abū 'Barakat al-mūrīd (1478)(23).
11. A former mint official of the mint of Old Cairo is mentioned in a letter from Alexandria dated October 21, 1219 (24).

In all the above cases, Goitein mentions the relative Geniza documents. These documents are dispersed all over the world. It cannot be said in how far they were published. Inasmuch as many Jews worked in the mint, it is expected, that when Geniza documents are published in the future, more names will become known.

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THE CITY OF ERFURT

BY EDWARD SCHUMAN

The city of ERFURT, in Thuringia, East Germany was in the 15th century perhaps the largest and most important city of Jewish learning, with most of the important leading Rabbis officiating. During this period, Erfurt Jews played an important part of Thuringia banking.



The synagogue in Erfurt, East Germany, built 1840, destroyed during *Kristallnacht*, Nov. 9-10, 1938.

Jews are first mentioned in Erfurt in the 12th century. At first they were under the protection of the king, but in the later half of the century, control of the Jews passed to the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Mainz. In 1209, the king relinquished his right to collect taxes from the Jews, but this right was shortly granted to the archbishop. In 1221 anti-Jewish riots broke out, the synagogue was burned and a number of Jews were murdered while others threw themselves into the flames as martyrs. Nevertheless the Jewish community continued to exist. Again a new synagogue was built. The protection of the Jews was transferred to the municipality in the beginning of the 14th century, when the king cancelled all debts owed to Jews by Christians for the sum of 2,000

gulden. The municipality paid this amount to the king, but claimed it back from the Jews with special taxes. Jews were compelled to declare the amount of the value of their property on oath in the synagogue. However, by 1458 they were expelled from the city.

Around 1820, the Prussian authorities used the tombstones in the Jewish cemetery as part of the fortifications of the city. Jews again began settling in Erfurt about this time, and numbered less than 1000 to the time of the Nazis. The synagogue was burned down on November 9th, 1938. The Jewish community was compelled to pay for the benzine used to ignite the synagogue, and for clearing the ruins. The entire Jewish population was deported to either Buchenwald or Theresienstadt.

A few Jews returned to Erfurt after the war, and a new synagogue was opened in 1952, Erfurt today has a small Jewish population.

Numismatically, Erfurt is remembered for its own coins minted between 1341 to 1801, though the thaler coinage ceased way before the later date. It accepted the Reformation in 1521 and was engulfed in the Thirty Years War, when it was occupied for some time by Sweden. Erfurt issued coins in the name of Gustavus Adolphus. Several of these coins bear the Hebrew letters spelling out "Jehovah." These issues are generally accepted as part of a Judaica collection,

TALER 1632

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS decoration A DOMINO MISSUS VIVAT. in center "JEHOVAH" in flaming sun, DEXTERA TUA / DOMINE, PERCUSSIT / INIMICUM decoration
DIES PURIM EUANGELICOR. Ao. M.D:C.XXXII. VII SEPT. ERFURTI CELEBRATI, in center DEO TER OPT. / ANNO / M.D:C.XXXI. (arabesque), in 11 lines.



JEHOVAH in Hebrew between angels over city view, all in wreath with four shields in border.

The ALEPH BETH Page

...Dedicated to the Beginner

by Edward Janis



Q. I went to a flea market last Sunday and picked up the following medal. It has some flowers on one side and says "I am the rose of Sharon". It's dated 1924-1964. It came in a beautiful square olivewood case. Can you help me identify it? Issac V., St. Petersburg, Fla.



A. This medal was officially commissioned for the 40th anniversary celebration of an administrative union of four settlements in the Sharon Valley. The rim is, on the obverse from three o'clock counterclockwise to nine o'clock, the Hebrew inscription "To the combining of the four Sharon settlements". In the exergue around the rim, the names appear in Hebrew, "Magdiel, Ramatyim, Hadar". The shield depicts a gear for industry, a tree for fruit cultivation and furrows for planted crops. On the reverse, "I am the rose of Sharon" is in Hebrew and English. The rose of Sharon really belongs to the lily family and that is what the four flowers in the field represent.

This medal was an official commission medal and has the customary "State of Israel" in Hebrew and English even though this medal was struck at the Hecht mint in Tel-Aviv. This medal was issued to all who participated in the celebration.

BEZEQ and The Telephone Tokens of Israel

*by Dr. Uriel Paul Federbush
Rehovot, Israel*

BEZEQ, The Israel Telecommunications Corp. Ltd., came into being in February 1984. The work in Hebrew means "in a flash" or immediate. Previously the work was handled by the Ministry of Posts, and subsequently in 1981 by the Ministry of Communications. BEZEQ, an independent public corporation, was created in order to improve the efficiency and workings of Israeli telecommunication. For the first time all income was reinvested by the new corporation in improvements rather than going into the general government fund. The investment in infrastructure and equipment is already influencing the level of service.

The number of public pay phones in Israel — 3.6 per thousand population — compares favorably in an international context. This ratio is better than that in England, but substantially less than that in the United States.

A new BEZEQ telephone token will shortly be issued. The enclosed illustration is the first to be published. The date that will appear in the same position as on previous tokens will be the Hebrew equivalent of 1987.

According to information issued by BEZEQ, the first telephone tokens were placed into use on February 2, 1958. These were made of copper and minted by a British concern, ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries). It was originally thought to manufacture them flat, but a "belly" toward the reverse was designed so as not to enable the use of the ten pruta copper coin in the pay telephones. Information as to number struck is unavailable.

The next series of tokens, dated 1964, were struck by Chaim Murro Ltd. of Jerusalem. Thirty two thousand were minted in brass. For the first time the issuing authority was named as the Ministry of Posts. Here a tradition in medallic art was being perpetuated, as the owner's father, Moshe Murro, a prominent teacher at the Bezalel Art Academy, had been the engraver of numerous plaques and medals. These tokens apparently did not wear well and were therefore in use for just a limited period in 1964-65.

The orders for new tokens were then placed overseas with the Vereinigte Deutsche Metallwerke A.G. (United German Metalworks). The metal used became cupronickel. The tokens dated 1966 were minted until 1981 in the total amount of 38.2 million.

In 1981, for financial reasons and in order to support local industry, the tokens began to be minted in Israel. The issuing authority then changed to the Ministry of Communications. Contracts were let to two firms; Moshe Hecht Ltd. of Tel Aviv, and Kibbutz Mefalsim in the south of Israel, not far from Gaza.

Those minted by Hecht used the traditional method of solid planchets and blanks. However, the manufacturing process at the Kibbutz utilizes Solid State Diffusion or Sintering, with the raw material being metal powder.

As of 1984 12.5 million tokens had been struck by the Kibbutz, and 10 million by Hecht.

Each minter can be recognized by distinctive marks placed on their tokens. Hecht tokens have a small rectangular depression on the dial guard on the reverse parallel to the edge. Kibbutz Mefalsim tokens are identified by a raised "dot" above the last two letters of the Hebrew date on the reverse superiorle on the left.

The contract for the new BEZEQ tokens, in an initial issue of 1.5 million, has been equally divided between these two Israeli firms.

However, the "Tale of the Telephone Tokens" may be coming to an end. According to plans on the drawing boards, holographic cards, already widely in use in places such as England are the wave of the future. These will be sold at prices corresponding to the number of call units coded on them. The future telephone instruments will automatically record the units used. During 1988-89 it is proposed to install two thousand test public phones utilizing this technology. With fourteen thousand public phones presently in use, the changeover will of necessity take time.

More types of Israeli telephone tokens have been minted than heretofore recorded. The purpose of the "belly" on the first token has been noted. The subsequent tokens are all the same design. The trough on the obverse makes counterfeiting difficult, and has to do with the insertion of the token correctly into the slot and the pathway along the phone's chute. The hole in the center is related to a sensor in the instrument, and not as widely thought to enable them to be strung together. The "Running Stag" was the emblem of both the Ministry of Posts and later of the Ministry of Communications.

The Telephone Tokens

- I. All are holed in the center.
 - II. All have plain edges.
 - III. The diameter of Tokens 1 and 2 is 26 mm. The thickness of 1 1/2 mm. The diameter of the others is 19 mm. The thickness is 2.8 mm.
1. Date: 5713 (1953) Metal: Copper
Mint: ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) — England
Obverse: The word "Telephone" in Hebrew above and in English below. The Hebrew date 5713 on the upper rim of the concavity. Beaded rim on edge.

Reverse: Facsimile telephone dial with guard and encircled numbers. Incused number "8" on right side between the telephone numbers one and zero. This may have been due to the initial token price of 80 pruta becoming 8 Agorot with the currency changeover. Beaded rim on edge.

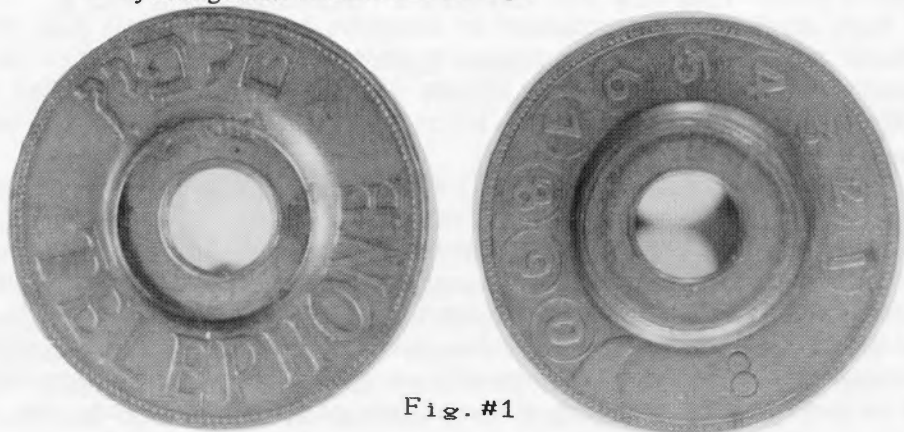


Fig. #1

2. Date: 5713 (1953)

Metal: Copper

Mint: ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) — England

Obverse: Same as Token 1.

Reverse: Same as Token 1 without the incused number "8".

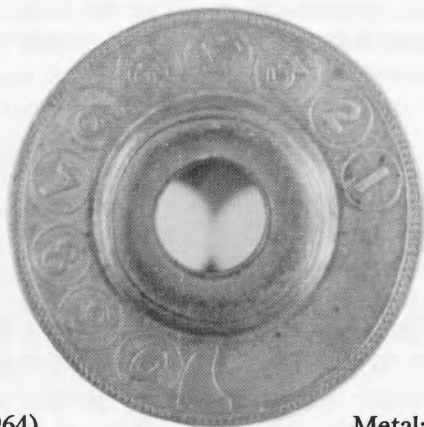


Fig. #2

3. Date: 5724 (1964)

Metal: Brass

Mint: Chaim Murro Ltd. — Jerusalem

Mintage: 32,000

Obverse: Above, Hebrew date — 5724 — on either side of running stag emblem.

Below, in Hebrew and Arabic the work "Telephone".

Reverse: Facsimile telephone dial with guard and encircled numbers.
Around center hole in Hebrew, Doar Israel or Post of Israel.

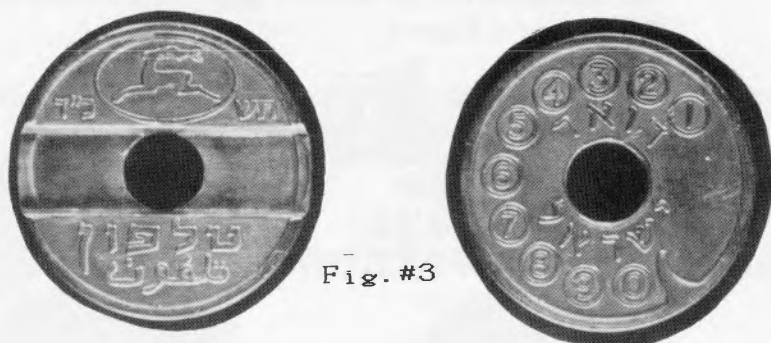


Fig. #3

4. Date: 5726 (1966)

Metal: Cupronickel

Mint: V.D.M. (Vereinigte Deutsche Metallwerke) — Germany

Mintage: 38.2 million.

Obverse: Above, Hebrew date — 5726 — on either side of running stag emblem. Otherwise same as Token 3.

Reverse: Same as Token 3.

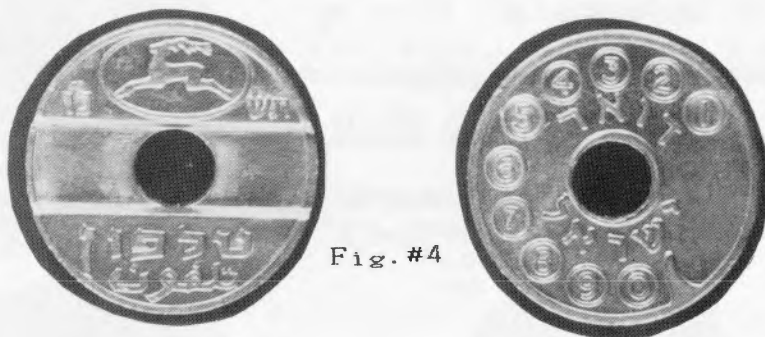


Fig. #4

5. Date: 5741 (1981)

Metal: Cupronickel

Mint: Moshe Hecht Ltd. — Tel Aviv

Mintmark: Rectangular depression on dial guard parallel to edge.

Obverse: Above, Hebrew date — 5741 — on each side of running stag emblem.

Single apostrophe between the last two letters of the Hebrew date.

The apostrophe touches the letter Aleph in the Hebrew date.

Below, same as Token 3.

Reverse: Facsimile telephone dial with guard containing rectangular depression, and encircled numbers.

Around center hole in Hebrew, Misrad Hatikshoret or Ministry of Communications.

Large letters.

Raised dot on right below the number "1".



Fig. #5



6. Date: 5741 (1981)

Metal: Cupronickel

Mint: Moshe Hecht Ltd. — Tel Aviv

Mintmark: Rectangular depression on dial guard parallel to edge.

Obverse: Single apostrophe between the last two letters of the Hebrew date.

The apostrophe touches the letter Mem in the Hebrew date.

Otherwise same as Token 5.

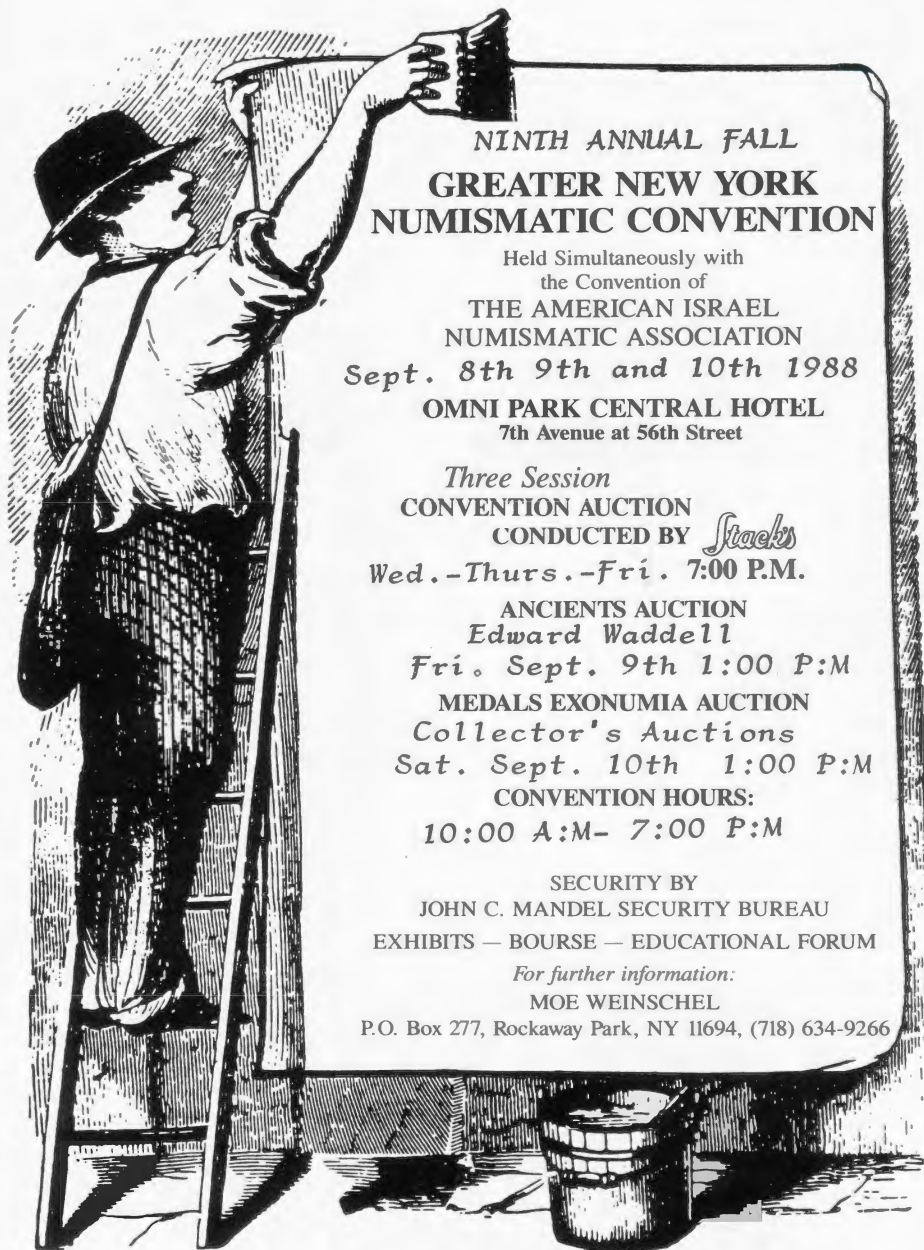
Reverse: Same as Token 5.



Fig. #6



The raised "dots" were intended to identify different batches of tokens struck for security control reasons. This was immediately discontinued as not practical or workable. Consequently relatively few exist, making them rare.



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